

cies). Their accountability can be measured by their use in resource management decisions and their ongoing value as interpretive resources supporting public presentations. By these measures, projects like the partnership effort, involving the authors of the papers in this issue and the several hundred other people who worked together on the Historic Contact theme study, may be considered

among one of the most important things we can do.

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## Veletta Canouts

# The NHL Archeological Initiative

**W**ith the completion of the Historic Contact theme study to designate archeological properties as National Historic Landmarks (NHLs), the Archeological Assistance Program (AAP) has established the success of the NHL Archeological Initiative begun 10 years ago. The original initiative had two goals: (1) to develop nominations of new archeological properties, and (2) to increase professional and public awareness of the NHL program for long-term site protection.

Through the combined efforts of NPS regional AAP offices and the Archeological NHL Committee of the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) and the Society for Historic Archaeology (SHA), the number of nominations and listings for archeology has increased by almost 50 since 1988. In FY 1987, the AAP workplan identified NHLs as an important component of the program, with the support of the Cultural Resources Associate Director, then Jerry L. Rogers. AAP regional offices began actively to promote and solicit NHL nominations; these offices developed nominations on their own and in cooperation with NPS units and other federal agencies, tribal, state, and local governments and with private landowners. Nominations flowed in for all types of sites—from rock art to monumental mound constructions—from as far north as Alaska and south to Mississippi.

The Archeological NHL Committee has been instrumental in providing expertise for the peer review of these nominations. Operating under a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperative Agreements with NPS, the SAA and SHA established formal review procedures. The first chair of that committee, Dr. David Brose, has since served on the Advisory Board for NHL designations.

The Archeological Assistance Program sponsored the preparation and publication of two tech-

nical briefs to promote archeology in the National Historic Landmarks program. The first brief, which described what NHLs are and how to nominate sites for NHL status, was published in 1988 (Technical Brief No. 3) and coincided with the AAP initiative to increase the number of archeological NHLs. Technical Brief No. 10, 1990, described how theme studies, which can integrate geographically or temporally dispersed sites, could be used for comprehensive planning. The author of the briefs, Dr. Robert Grumet, AAP staff member in the NPS Philadelphia office, demonstrated the applicability and efficacy of a thematic approach in the theme study highlighted in this issue of *CRM*.

Three National Park Service divisions, the Archeological NHL Committee, 17 State Historic Preservation Offices, several Native American tribes, and more than 200 professional and avocational archeologists and historians contributed to the study. Seventeen archeological properties representing 300 years of Indian, European, and African American interaction were added to the list of NHLs.

In 1992, this theme study and other successful NHL efforts were highlighted in a symposium, co-sponsored by NPS and SAA at the SAA national meetings in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The current "Earliest Americans National Historic Landmark Theme Study," a multi-year effort begun in 1994 to identify, evaluate, and designate archeological sites associated with the earliest sites of the nations first peoples, was similarly highlighted at this year's SAA meetings in Minneapolis at a workshop organized by AAP staff and SAA participants.

The goals of the NHL Archeological Initiative appear to be firmly grounded. The theme approach provides a context; the professional community is cooperating in promoting and reviewing NHL nominations; and the AAP is actively working

within parks and with other land managing agencies and organizations to identify and better manage significant archeological resources for the benefit of professional and public interests. Funding for these efforts has been limited to date, but as the Historic Contact theme study shows, the basis for NHL successes depends upon the willingness and cooperation of professionals and volunteers. We wish to express our appreciation

and continued support for all of those who have contributed in the past or who hope to contribute to future NHL nominations.

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*See page 14 for a partial listing of archeological National Historic Landmarks.*

Melissa Jayne Fawcett

## Shantok: A Tale of Two Sites



*Shantok Burial and Festival Grounds: Sacred Site, Mohegan Nation*

*Fort Shantok: National Historic Landmark, United States of America*

*Mohegans gather at Shantok in the 1920s. Left to right: Myrtice Fielding, Burrill Fielding (Chief Matahga), Loretta Fielding, Lemuel Fielding (Chief Occum), Medicine Woman Dr. Gladys Tantaquidgeon, Elmer Fielding. Thames River in background.*

Shantok tells a tale of two sites, or of one place viewed in two very different ways. To the National Park Service, Fort Shantok in the eastern Connecticut town of Montville, is a National Historic Landmark dedicated in 1993. It represents an archeological site of national significance in the early history of the United States. To the people of the Mohegan Indian Tribe, Shantok is a place of many stories. Some are ancient tales of great deeds by Sachem Uncas over three centuries old. Others are more recent, like my sister's wedding at Shantok last October, at which her nephew, David Uncas, sang a rap version of "Here Comes the Bride."

The spirit of Mohegan lies at Shantok. It is a place that we Mohegans come from, the place from which we draw strength, and the place where we ultimately journey to the Spirit Land. The Ancient Mohegan Burial Ground where many of our ancestors rest is the focal point of Shantok to Mohegan people. Marked burials range in age from five months to 350 years. Funerals for tribal members today still include the same offerings of arrowheads, tobacco, and prayers as in ancient

times. But Shantok is not only a place of burials. It is a living village whose story-trails follow...

### *Seventeenth Century*

Our elders affirm that an independent-minded Pequot Sagamore named Uncas arrived with his supporters from across the Massapequotuck River (now known as the Thames River) to form the Mohegan Tribe at Shantok in 1635. Tradition holds that those 17th-century Mohegans first landed in their dugout canoes at the site of Shantok Rock. Located in Shantok Brook, this rock was destroyed by railroad construction in the 1840s. It is our version of Plymouth Rock. At Shantok, the first Mohegans created a fortified village, held festivals, and buried their dead. Since that time, 13 generations of Mohegans have also lived, played, celebrated, and been buried there.

By the 1640s, the Massapequotuck River had become a busy place as English newcomers invaded the region. Uncas began forming alliances between his people and these Wannuxsug (pale strangers). Other tribes, like the nearby Narragansetts, resisted the invaders. Clashes over Native policies toward the English eventually led the Narragansetts to besiege Fort Shantok in 1645. The Mohegans were saved by the success of their Moigu (shaman) in a duel with his Narragansett counterpart. Our oral tradition tells us that our Moigu swallowed a silver bullet two times. Passing it through his navel both times, he then loaded the charmed ball into his musket. Taking aim, he shot